

# ENGL 262: English Literature After 1800

## Spring 2023

Tu/Th 9:30–10:50am  
THH 117  
Zoom ID: 972 685 91548

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Office Hours: THH 433, Tu 11–12, Th 12:30–1:30  
(if on Zoom: 826 263 9043)



J. M. W. Turner, "Rain, Steam, and Speed – The Great Western Railway." 1844.  
London: The National Gallery.

### Course Description

Karl Marx once wrote that "the tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living." Philip Larkin put it more succinctly: "They fuck you up, your mum and dad."

This is a survey of English literature written over the last two centuries. It is also a class about *pastness*—the way the past haunts, tantalizes, bedevils. As we trace how writers variously navigated fraught relationships to the past, we will pay particular attention to how literary form and style are charged with changing historical and cultural import. Throughout we will understand that working with (or against) traditional literary forms is a way to explore what can be salvaged from the past, what can be repurposed, and what must be jettisoned altogether.

Decisions of form and style become even more pressing when we consider the toxic fallout of British imperialism, with its legacies of racial and ethnic violence, economic exploitation, and weaponized culture. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argues in *Decolonising the Mind*, the very fact of a literary work being written in English places it within this imperial history. Engaging works by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Mary Prince, Charlotte Brontë, Virginia Woolf, Jamaica Kincaid, and Mohsin Hamid, and others, we will follow how writers make their way in a compromised and at times harrowing literary tradition.

### Course Books

Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince* (1831; Penguin, 2001)

Charlotte Brontë, *Villette* (1853; Penguin, 2004)

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925; Harcourt)

Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy* (2002)

Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* (2017)

Please purchase actual physical copies (they're easier on the eyes and better for the brain; ask me if you would like to see the research that backs this up). Although you can buy alternative editions, make sure that they are real editions (published by an actual publishing house like Oxford, Penguin, Dover, etc.), rather than fake/weird copies that have been beep-booped together by a computer on Amazon.

All other assigned readings not in the course books will be available over Blackboard. Please print out all class readings and bring to class.

## Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and provide examples of features of major literary genres, movements, and periods in English literature after 1800.
- Use standard techniques of literary analysis including paraphrase, observation, analysis, argument, and counterargument.
- Reflect on how historical literary concepts and practices relate to you today by experimentally incorporating them into your life.
- Comparatively analyze style and literary technique by creatively "translating" a scene from one literary text into another.
- Create a map of English literature after 1800 that draws on established literary landmarks and your own personal reading experiences.

## Description of Assignments and Grading Breakdown

This seminar is designed around weekly intensive work rather than building to cumulative, high-stakes assignments. As such, it depends on your curiosity, your willingness to take intellectual risks, and your lively engagement with the readings, with one another, with me, and with yourself.

You will write three short papers. Two will be **creative exercises**: you will "translate" a passage from one literary text into the style of another text; and you will write a section of your own "waste land" poem, drawing on T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. The third will be an **analytic essay** (3–4 pages) putting together some of the observation and analysis skills we have practiced in class to close read a passage of a literary work.

You will post **ten entries** to the course blog (this includes comments on others' posts).

You will create a **visual map** of the literature we read for class. The map will help you study for the **final exam**, which will test you on: comparison of different genres, movements, and periods; paraphrase; stylistic translation; responding to an argument about a literary text; and analysis of a theme of your choice that emerged through your course reading.

In accordance with USC guidelines, you should plan to spend about two hours preparing for each hour of class. (Since our classes are an hour and a half each, that means you will spend approximately three hours preparing for each class.)

Assignment	Points
Blog Posts	100
Map	125
Creative Exercise (Translation)	125
Creative Exercise (Waste Land)	125
Analytic Essay	125
Participation	150
Final Exam	250

Final Grade: A 930–1000; A- 895–929; B+ 870–894; B 830–869; B- 795–829; C+ 770–794; C 730–769

## Expectations

You will:

- **attend class regularly and on time.** Please clear legitimate absences—for illness, religious holidays, or emergencies—with me beforehand. After two unexcused absences, each further unexcused absence will cost ten points from your participation grade. Two instances of tardiness count as an unexcused absence.
- **closely read assigned texts**, making notes while you read, and come to class prepared for discussion.
- **work to produce creative and intelligent writing.**

- **turn your work in on time.** Exercises and essays turned in after the due date will be penalized by ten points for each day that they are late. Contact me ahead of time if you will need an extension.

I will:

- **prepare for class time** while remaining flexible to respond to your interests, questions, and concerns.
- **approach each day with enthusiasm** and an openness to learning alongside you.
- **communicate clearly and in a timely manner** about assignments, deadlines, and grading criteria.
- **be available** over email and during office hours to discuss issues relating to the course, and to serve as a resource for your reading, thinking, and writing.
- **read your work carefully, provide thoughtful feedback, and evaluate it fairly** according to clear standards.

Schedule of Readings			
	Topics	Readings	Tasks
<b>Week 1</b>			
Jan 10		Philip Larkin, "Sad Steps" Suniti Namjoshi, "Bird Woman"	
Jan 12	<b>Romanticism</b> songs, ballads, lyrical ballads	William Blake, from <i>Songs of Innocence</i> : "The Lamb," "Nurse's Song"; from <i>Songs of Experience</i> : "Nurse's Song" "The Sick Rose," "The Tyger" Robert Burns, "A Red, Red Rose" William Wordsworth, "Anecdote for Fathers," "Old Man Travelling," "The Tables Turned," "A slumber did my spirit seal"	
<b>Week 2</b>			
Jan 17		Samuel Taylor Coleridge, <i>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i>	
Jan 19	epic	Blake, from <i>Jerusalem</i> Wordsworth, from <i>The Prelude</i>	

		George Gordon, Lord Byron, from <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i>	
<b>Week 3</b>			
Jan 24	odes	Percy Shelley, "Mont Blanc," "Ode to the West Wind" John Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale," "To Autumn"	
Jan 26		Mary Prince, <i>The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave</i>	
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Victorian era</b>		
Jan 31	dramatic monologue	J. S. Mill, "What is Poetry?" Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess," "Porphyria's Lover" Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Mariana," "Ulysses," "The Lotos-Eaters"	
Feb 2	Bildungsroman	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
<b>Week 5</b>			Complete 5 blog posts by end of this week
Feb 7		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
Feb 9		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
<b>Week 6</b>			Turn in creative exercise 1
Feb 14		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
Feb 16		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
<b>Week 7</b>			
Feb 21		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
Feb 23		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
<b>Week 8</b>			
Feb 28		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
Mar 2		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
<b>Week 9</b>			
Mar 7		Brontë, <i>Villette</i>	
Mar 9	Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, aestheticism	Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," "Jenny," <i>Proserpine, The Blessed Damozel, Lady Lilith</i> John Everett Millais, <i>Ophelia</i>	Turn in analytic essay

		Julia Margaret Cameron, <i>So like a Shatter'd Column Lay the King, The Mountain Nymph Sweet Liberty</i> Walter Pater, from <i>Studies in the History of the Renaissance</i> Michael Field, "[A girl]," "[It was deep April, and the morn]"	
		SPRING BREAK	
<b>Week 10</b> Mar 21	<b>Modernism</b> WWI Poetry	Edward Thomas, "Rain" Siegfried Sassoon, "They," from <i>Memoirs of an Infantry Officer</i> Isaac Rosenberg, "Dead Man's Dump" Wilfred Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," "Dulce Et Decorum Est" William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming"	Complete 8 blog posts by end of this week
Mar 23		T. S. Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i>	
<b>Week 11</b> Mar 28		Virginia Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> , pp. 1–64	
Mar 30		Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> , pp. 66–151	
<b>Week 12</b> Apr 4		Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> , pp. 151–194	
Apr 6	<b>Global afterlives</b>	W.H. Auden, "Lullaby" Elizabeth Bishop, "At the Fishhouses," "In the Waiting Room" Dylan Thomas, "In My Craft or Sullen Art" Philip Larkin, "Talking in Bed" A.K. Ramanujan, "Self-Portrait"	Turn in creative exercise 2
<b>Week 13</b> Apr 11		Ngugi.wa Thiong'o, from <i>Decolonising the Mind</i> Louise Bennett, "Colonization in Reverse" Kamau Brathwaite, "Calypso" Grace Nichols, "Epilogue," "The Fat Black Woman Goes Shopping" Linton Kwesi Johnson, "Inglan Is a Bitch" Hanif Kureishi, from <i>The Rainbow Sign</i>	
Apr 13		Jamaica Kincaid, <i>Lucy</i>	
<b>Week 14</b> Apr 18			

Apr 20		Jamaica Kincaid, <i>Lucy</i> Mohsin Hamid, <i>Exit West</i> , chs. 1–4	
<b>Week 15</b> Apr 25 Apr 27		Hamid, <i>Exit West</i> , chs. 5–8 Hamid, <i>Exit West</i> , chs. 9–12	Turn in map
<b>Week 16</b>			<b>Final Exam</b> Tu May 9, 8–10am

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

### Support Systems:

*Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations.

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*



Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](https://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.*

Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu)